

# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

June 2003

Work continues on the process of updating the Folsom Lake SRA General Plan/Resource Management Plan (RMP). This project, which is a partnership between the California Department of Parks and Recreation and the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation, will result in a single and cohesive management document for the SRA that will guide the future protection of natural and cultural resources and the development of public use facilities.

This newsletter is the third of six newsletters intended to keep you updated throughout the planning process. It briefly describes the progress to date on developing alternative concepts for future park facilities and programs.

## Purpose of Folsom Lake SRA

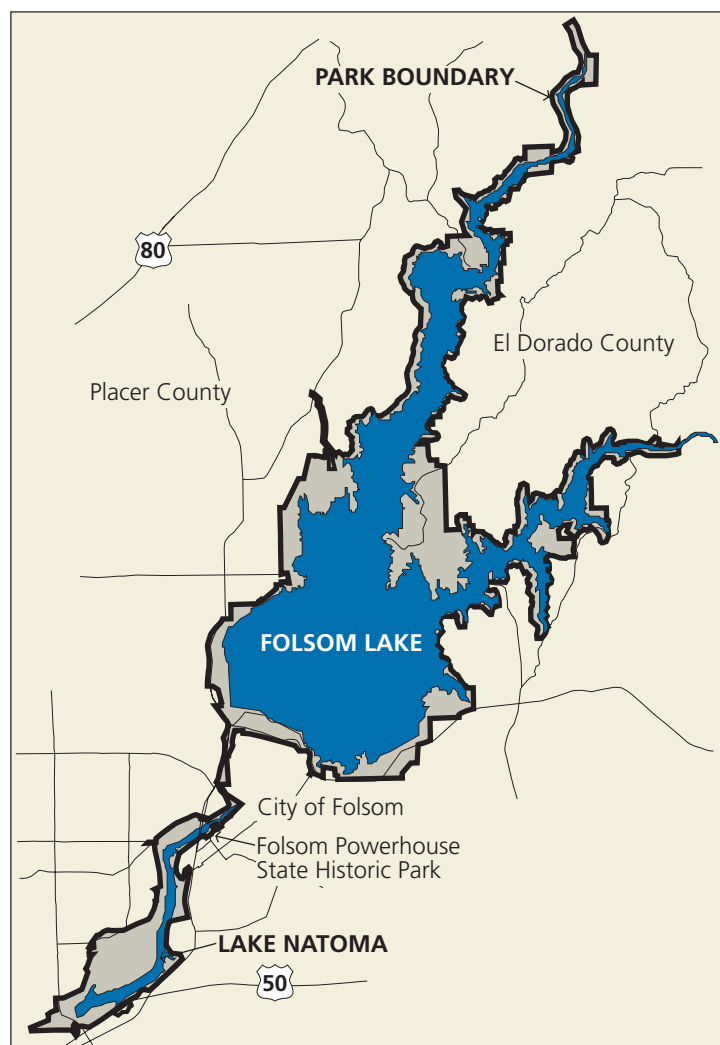
In any park planning project, the purpose of the park must inform and guide the development of alternative concepts for the future. Folsom Lake State Recreation Area (SRA) was classified as such in 1956 when the State entered into an agreement with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to manage recreation facilities at Folsom Lake and Lake Natoma.

According to the California Public Resources Code, an SRA provides multiple recreational opportunities on lands capable of supporting such activities. These areas are usually located in close proximity to a large population centers, major travel route, or manmade or natural recreation resource. This classification permits a broad range of recreation uses and facilities. It also requires that planning for improvements consider the compatibility of design with the resource values present.

The specific purpose of Folsom Lake SRA, as defined in the current General Plan, is:

*“...to make available to the people the great recreational opportunities afforded by, and in relation to, the reservoirs impounded behind Folsom and Nimbus dams on the American River, including aquatic features, environmental amenities, and the historic values of the localities, and to interpret these resources to the people.”*

As part of the process of updating the General Plan for Folsom Lake SRA, various alternative concepts for the park (as well as specific geographic areas) will be developed and analyzed as a means of exploring future opportunities and determining a future management approach.



## Establishing Management Zones

The first step in determining a future management approach for the park is to establish management zones. In doing so, it is important to acknowledge that the park includes a range of uses, facility types, resource values, and visitor experiences, and that not all areas should be managed in exactly the same way. While the current General Plan for the park does not use this approach, recent State and federal park planning guidelines recommend it.

The delineation of each management zone reflects the consideration of a number of factors, including existing and potential type and intensity of land use, visitor experience, resource values, and the practicalities of day-to-day management and operations. The planning team has identified 22 management zones on Folsom Lake and 12 on Lake Natoma, each representing an area of the park with certain physical resource and use characteristics that should be managed as a distinct subarea.

**PROJECT INITIATION**

- \* Project Initiation
- \* Site Reconnaissance and Data Collection
- \* Base Map Preparation/Develop GIS Format and Protocols
- \* Stakeholder Identification
- \* Establish Project Web Page

**UNDERSTANDING THE SITE AND PLANNING CONTEXT**

- \* Stakeholders/Focus Group Meetings
- \* Draft Resource Inventory -- Existing Conditions
- \* **Public Workshop #1--Issues and Opportunities (November '02)**
- \* Newsletter #1
- \* Final Resource Inventory
- \* Newsletter #2

**Draft Land Use Designations**

The planning team has identified four draft land use designations that apply to all upland and aquatic areas in the park. These designations broadly describe and establish land use, intensity of use, and resource objectives. Based on the physical resource and use characteristics of each management zone, the planning team has assigned each zone a preliminary land use designation. Some management zones, based on existing conditions, may fit into more than one designation. The draft land use designations include:

**Recreation**

These areas typically include existing recreation facilities, have limited resource values, and are large enough for the facilities needed to support more intense recreational uses. Recreation areas may include marinas, swimming beaches, boat launches, day use facilities, visitor/interpretive centers, and various support facilities. This designation is assigned by the intensity of use.

*High-intensity* recreation areas are extensively developed and serve as major gateways for visitors. Such areas in the park include Beals Point, Granite Bay, Brown's Ravine, and Nimbus Flat. *Medium-intensity* recreation areas are less developed and offer fewer facilities but remain significant gateways for visitors. Such areas in the park include Folsom Point and Negro Bar.

**Conservation**

Conservation areas include natural and/or cultural resources suitable for protection and enhancement along with recreation uses that are compatible with and dependent on the resources. Conservation areas may include low-intensity recreation facilities (limited-service camping, trails/trailheads), interpretive facilities (centers, signs/displays, viewing areas/lookouts), and various habitat protection, restoration, and management activities. Public access to such areas may be controlled or limited to

protect resources. Such areas in the park include Mississippi Bar, the Peninsula, and shoreline areas between the major recreation facilities.

**Preservation**

These areas reflect unique or fragile natural and cultural resources that must be protected and preserved. Preservation areas may include limited safety, scientific, maintenance, and controlled interpretive and educational activities. In order to protect and preserve the resources associated with this designation, public use, management, and facility development in these areas is more strictly controlled. Such areas in the park include Mormon Island Wetland Preserve, Anderson Island Natural Preserve, and Folsom Powerhouse State Historic Park.

**Administration**

Administration areas include facilities associated with the operation and maintenance of the park, in general, or of Folsom Lake and Lake Natoma for the purposes of flood control, water supply, and power generation. Facilities in these areas include dams, hydro-electric generating equipment, administration buildings, corporation yards, and parking areas operated by the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Reclamation and the California Department of Parks and Recreation. Public access is generally restricted. Such areas in the park include Folsom Dam, Nimbus Dam/Nimbus Fish Hatchery, and Park Headquarters.

As noted, the preliminary determination of land use designations in the park by the planning team is based on the recreational use, character, and resource quality of each management zone. Not only does this classification of the management zones provide a framework for making future management decisions, but also it provides the basis for developing and analyzing alternative concepts for future park facilities and programs.

**Preliminary Alternative Concepts**

The planning team has identified several preliminary concepts for the park related to specific geographic areas, facilities and uses, and management issues. These concepts represent a range of options intended to respond specifically to key issues identified during the preparation of the Resource Inventory. Many of these issues were raised by the public, key stakeholders, and other agencies and organizations at the public workshop and various stakeholder meetings held in the fall of 2002, and in comment sheets and correspondence received by the planning team since the project began. Other issues were raised by State

## PHASE III: April to September 2003

### DEFINING THE VISION

- \* Resource Summary/Statement of Park Purpose and Vision
- \* Develop Alternatives
- \* Newsletter #3
- \* **Public Workshop #2--Exploring Alternatives (June '03)**
- \* Newsletter #4
- \* Develop Preferred Park Concept

## PHASE IV: September 2003 to Nov. 2004

### GENERAL PLAN/RMP

- \* Preliminary General Plan/RMP
- \* Newsletter #5
- \* **Public Workshop #3--Preliminary GP/RMP (June '04)**
- \* Newsletter #6
- \* Public Review Period and Hearing on GP/RMP DEIR/EIS
- \* Commission Adoption/Certification Hearing (November '04)

Parks management and staff based on their day-to-day experience in operating the park. Once public input is received on the concepts, the planning team will determine which merit further consideration and analysis.

### Geographic Areas

Preliminary concepts have been identified for a number of geographic areas in the park. Given that the park was established almost 40 years ago, some areas are well developed and are unlikely to change. However, there are large undeveloped areas in the park that could accommodate a range of recreation and resource management objectives. The concepts respond directly to the key issues identified for each area. The geographic areas on Folsom Lake include: North Granite Bay, Rattlesnake Bar, Peninsula, Folsom Point, Mormon Island Preserve, Mormon Island Cove, and Observation Point. The areas on Lake Natoma include: Mississippi Bar, Snipes-Pershing Ravine, Negro Bar, Natoma Shore South, Nimbus Shoals, and Lake Overlook.

### Facilities and Uses

Preliminary concepts for facilities and uses in the park have also been identified, such as trails, aquatic capacity and facilities, camping, day use, and concessions. For each facility and use, a range of options exist, including reduction, elimination (in rare instances), enhancement and expansion, and development of new facilities and uses.

### Management Issues

Management issues for which preliminary concepts have been identified include land acquisition, urban-wildland interface, public access and circulation, off-road vehicle use, interpretation and education, and non-mission uses in the park.

### Other Issues

There are a many other park uses and resources for which updated guidelines and direction are needed. Based on public input received to date, these uses and resources have relatively little public controversy regarding their future management. While issues such as the management of invasive exotic species, protection of cultural resources, and water quality management may not be as compelling as some of the issues described above, they and others are important to the day-to-day operation and management of the park and will be addressed in the General Plan regardless of the concepts selected.

### Public Workshop on Alternative Concepts

You are invited to attend a public workshop on the preliminary alternative concepts for the park. This event will provide you with an opportunity to review and comment on the concepts identified by the planning team. It is important to note that the alternative concepts at this point in the planning process are preliminary and represent a range of ideas and options for various areas, facilities and uses, and management issues. In addition, these concepts do not represent final solutions from which a "winner" is chosen, rather, they are intended to demonstrate the implications of making certain choices and illustrate the range of decisions to be made.

At the workshop, viewing stations will be set up to illustrate the various alternative concepts for the park and to receive your input. Based on your suggestions, the planning team will evaluate the preliminary alternative concepts in more detail considering only those concepts that have significant public support. This evaluation will allow the planning team to develop a preferred park concept that will provide the basis for the updated General Plan.

**The public workshop on the preliminary concepts will be held on June 10, 2003, 7:00pm to 9:30pm, at Folsom Middle School Auditorium, 500 Blue Ravine Road, Folsom, CA 95630.**





# We Want to Hear From You!

There will be other opportunities for public input throughout the planning process. If you are not currently on our mailing list, or if you would like further information, there are several ways you can contact us:

## Mail

Folsom Lake SRA General Plan Update  
c/o Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC  
1328 Mission Street, 4th Floor  
San Francisco, CA 94103

## E-Mail

folsomlakeplanupdate@sf.wrtdesign.com

## Phone

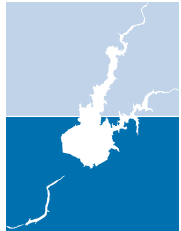
Jim Micheals  
State Parks Gold Fields District  
(916) 988-9116 Ext. 202

## Web

You can also visit the State Parks Website at [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov) and clicking on "General Plans" under "Related Links."



FOLSOM LAKE/NATOMA



## FOLSOM LAKE SRA GENERAL PLAN UPDATE

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